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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**State Receives Prestigious National Awards Recognizing
Program Excellence in Housing and Community
Development Innovations**

Indiana was brought into the national spotlight once again this month at the [2014 National Council of State Housing Agencies' \(NCSHA\) Annual Trade Show and Conference](#) which took place in Boston, Massachusetts. The Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority (IHCD) was presented with two 2014 Annual Awards for Program Excellence from their peers.

The awards included:

- Excellence in Legislative Advocacy- State Advocacy
Taking Action against Blighted, Vacant and Abandoned Properties

Indiana has the highest percentage of abandoned foreclosed homes in the country, making blighted, vacant and abandoned homes a serious issue for Hoosier homeowners, neighborhoods and communities.

In February 2014, the U.S. Department of the Treasury approved the use of \$75 million of Indiana's \$221 million Hardest Hit Funds by IHCD for the Blight Elimination Program, which provides funding to local governments to eliminate blighted properties. Before funding and demolition, municipalities must identify an end use for each proposed property, such as green space or redevelopment, stabilizing housing values and helping to prevent further foreclosures. Through the Blight Elimination Program an estimated 4,000 properties will be improved across the state.

Additional portions of the program included a blight task force, which spearheaded recent legislation that streamlined procedures dealing with abandoned homes in Indiana. IHCD staff, with the enthusiastic support of Lt. Governor Sue Ellspermann and Senator Jim Merritt (R-Indianapolis), also spearheaded public meetings on the Blight Elimination Program, to educate citizens and hear their thoughts. For more information on Indiana's Hardest Hit Fund Blight Elimination Program, visit www.877GetHope.org/blight.

- Excellence in Rental Housing- Multifamily Management
Indiana Compliance Working Groups

While compliance is important, five years ago IHCD determined that regulated entities would have a higher rate of compliance if they felt they were heard as partners. To foster

these relationships, IHCDa created a Rental Compliance Working Group, made of compliance and property management specialists representing 14 active low-income-focused management companies in Indiana.

Meeting five times a year, the working group provides an opportunity to share ideas, suggestions and to learn from the success and difficulties of each property. The working group has additionally helped to streamline compliance forms, as well as improve the usability of IHCDa's compliance manual and online reporting portal.

Building on the success of the Rental Compliance Working Group, IHCDa has added another, the Federal Programs Working Group. This supplementary group will meet twice a year to discuss issues related to the implementation of other grant program requirements and regulations.

"These awards are well deserved recognition for the great staff at the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority who are constantly looking for creative solutions to improve Hoosier communities." said Lt. Governor Sue Ellspermann. "Providing affordable housing and supporting neighborhood development are steps to strengthen Indiana's cities and towns."

Both programs were designed to enhance the way IHCDa programs and initiatives serve Hoosiers. From improving compliance at affordable housing developments to removing blighted, abandoned homes to stabilize property values, IHCDa is committed to building a sustainable quality of life for all Hoosiers.

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The Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority (IHCDa), chaired by Lt. Governor Ellspermann, provides housing opportunities, promotes self-sufficiency and strengthens communities in order to build an Indiana with a sustainable quality of life for all Hoosiers in the community of their choice. For more information, visit www.ihcda.in.gov or www.in.gov/myihcda.

Media Contact:

Amber Kent
IHCDa Public Information Officer
akent1@ihcda.in.gov
(317) 232-7781